

August 2013 Overview
Shasta-Trinity Backcountry Trails Crew
Supervisor- Julian Wischniewski

Overview:

So here we are, it's August, or what I like to call the teeter-totter month. It's a pivotal point where a crew decides to be A CREW. I'm happy to say that the Shasta-Trinity Backcountry Trails Crew has come to that actualization. The work assigned by our sponsor, Holly, was the test. Parts of our home, the Stuart Fork Trail, were so eroded and needed serious surgery. Enter the crew. More rock was moved than ever this season; whole-hearted efforts to restore seventy damaged areas of this trail. The hiking has become a jog uphill to the work site. Chores go by without a thought nor complaint. And with the end in sight, I'm hearing more encouragement from their peers to remain present and take as much in as possible, to learn as much as possible. Moving a rock has lessons to offer, as it always should be. I'm under the impression that if one isn't learning something new (whatever it may be) on a rock project, then it's being done wrong. This is our reverence we have come to realize. Perhaps our morning sun-solutions ought to be rock-salutations.

Ah, the rock. Cross-country travel is much preferred by this eager and curious crew. All week long on the trail, calls for a few days off the trail. Return trips were made to some of the most beautiful parts of the Alps—notably Smith and Morris Lakes, Mirror Lake, and Thompson Peak. The high country is a dramatic contrast to our lives down in the drainage- visually and mentally. I'm grateful for the crew's utmost care during these travels. It shows not only respect for safety, but of the mountains and waters themselves. Dogen, a 13th century traveler/ Zen Priest comes to mind:

"If you doubt mountains' walking, you do not know your own walking."

May this intimate connection we've gained carry us through to the end of the season with continued passion and joy to be out here.

August as our month of CREW-FORGE success was impossible without these trips, and the challenging work given to us. So, thank you Holly for the continued support, direction, and motivation. Bonnie, your meals give us all the necessary fuel and joy to finish strong. Doug, Janet, Mike: Thanks for visiting the crew and playing great, great music. You've given so much already at Big Basin, and there you went again. Mike and the folks at the contracting office, we thank you for the information necessary for contracting jobs. Interests have been piqued. Mike, thanks for sharing some poetry. The crew still talks about them and wants a copy of some of them. And to the hikers Mike and Sherry (which the thunderstorm a few weekends ago was named after: "Hurricane Mike and Sherry") for hanging out during the downpour in camp and at Caribon. It's great to get feedback from all those from the outside, especially hikers. And always and forever- USFS Packers and the Backcountry Horsemen, we owe our internal gratitude. Without your support, our lives would be so different.

As September arrives, we hold strong the ideals set forth in our mission best summed up with- “to do something half-assed is to not do it at all.” See y’all at the finish line at this year’s debriefing ceremony, wherever that may be?

Curriculum:

- We continued to read “the Last Season” by Erik Blehm.
- Cowboy Poetry with Mike McFadden
- Information on Contracting with the Government.
- Jam session with Doug and Company.
- T-shirt designing
- Biographies told by- Camron Dyer, Daniel Schmidt, Ian McDonald, Nicole Sahabian and Julian Wischniewski
- Giving thanks, Backcountry Style (Thanksgiving Celebration)

Production:

Maintenance- 11.75 miles
Causeway 76 LY
Rip-rap- 25 LY
Checks 23
Multi-tier wall- 159.5 sq. ft.
French Drain 25 LY
Rehab work- 165 LY

Misc.:

Fires near our old camp around Oak Flat did not faze the crew. Thanks to USFS fire crew for keeping our forest home safe. The fires were put out, and then it rained for a few days after.

Corpsmember Overview Contribution:

By: Devin Stacy

As the month changes to August, we too are preparing for change. The coming of the month coincides with our third and what would prove to be, final camp move; an event seen with both trepidation and excitement; excitement for the fresh start and new domain to explore, trepidation for the daunting task of vainly attempting to pack all our gear into manageable loads and then carrying said loads over a dubious distance and questionable terrain. After concealing the evidence of our prior campy, we embarked, burdened much like the mules that provide us our weekly sustenance, only to discover our new camp was but a stone’s throw away. Granted, it would only suck if the one making the throw was a trebuchet as the distance was around five miles. This relatively paltry distance coupled with level terrain made for our easiest camp move yet, which of course, left us greatly disappointed.

After arriving and assembling our new camp, we were released on the Alps for our weekend. Some of the boys and I decided to conserve our energy from the grueling camp move and break in the new camp by staying in and only taking a day trip to the nearby lake, Emerald. The weekend passed in a daze of boyish humor, hanging out by the water, and ramen. Our first week of work had us doing a maintenance run to Emerald Lake. After days of what basically amounted to herbicide, we had cleared the trail and were once again free to explore on our weekend.

This weekend, my ground and I decided to cross-country up granite drainage and peak whatever mountain happened to be at the top. Hours of arduous climbing and gallons of coffee left us at the highest peak of the drainage. Previously unnamed, we deemed it, "miss four of clubs."

While taking our ease atop the world, we smoked cigars and took part in a crew ritual, Nudy Peaks. We bid miss four of clubs farewell and begin our trek home with aching muscles and creaky knees, but proud spirits.

Monday brought us our most expansive project yet, a veritable river of rock work. The crew would spend over three weeks paving a megalith causeway through the forest. On an average, unremarkable day, we threw a unsuspecting corpsmember a surprise birthday party.

As fitting for a 21st birthday, we all dressed in our finest club rat attire and drank virgin Irish coffee and virgin margaritas. For entertainment, we played pog and cards as the night bumped by in mild-mannered debauchery.

During our workweek of granite and irrigation, we heard news of a visitor; a sister of a fellow corpsmember was coming.

Due to some odd miscommunication, we ended up with an inordinately large weekend crew. This combined with our jubilation to interact with new people caused us to get out of hand in the best sort of way despite the laid back nature of the weekend.

Another week of rock work was preamble for the next birthday. This one conveniently fell on a weekend, so everyone on the crew who could manage went with her over caribou scrabble. Once in the beauty Alpine Valley, we raced rainclouds and bagged two peaks under their disdainful glare, all while paying homage to the Nudy Peaks committee.

Our third consecutive week on the project would see out roughly million stone job to its conclusion. Luckily, to break up the tedium, our old chief D-fresh, as we call him, hiked into visit. In commemoration, we held Backcountry Thanksgiving. Like any Thanksgiving, the night passed in a blur of calories, chatter, and music.

August ended with a bang for us, with one of the largest weekends of the season, Labor Day weekend.

While a few zealots on the crew got the notion to do a 70-mile weekend, my weekend crew was motivated by a different philosophy. We believe that continuous physical activity may be glorious in its own way, but sometimes, in excess it can deaden the senses and blind a person to the beauty around

them. We prefer to fully invest in the moment and share it with those around us, which we did plenty of as we spent the weekend relaxing and conversing with some old sponsors who came to visit.

August came to pass, bringing about an end, but not the end. It may be the dusk of our season, but the night is still yet to come.